

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 202620 TOSEC 090132  
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:SSOBER:BDF

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

S/S-O -LRFLEISCHER

NEA:ARDA

-----042328 250043Z /14

O 242350Z AUG 77 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 202620 TOSEC 090132

EXDIS FOR HABIB FROM SOBER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PO, XF

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE/ARAB DIFFICULTIES

REF: CAIRO 13970 (TOSEC 201983)

1. FOLLOWING A CALL ON HIM BY PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR, EILTS HAS ASKED WHETHER SECRETARY MIGHT HAVE RAISED WITH EGYPTIANS ON RECENT TRIP THE QUESTION OF ARAB PLANNING TO IMPOSE AN ECONOMIC BOYCOTT ON PORTUGAL IN RETALIATION FOR ITS ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL (REFTEL). EILTS ALSO SAYS HE WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH FAHMY.

2. WE ARE AWARE THAT SECRETARY TOOK THIS ISSUE UP WITH PRINCE SAUD WHO SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF AN EMBARGO WHICH WOULD BE UNWARRANTED WITH A COUNTRY THAT WAS MOVING AWAY FROM COMMUNISM. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE ISSUE WAS  
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RAISED WITH THE EGYPTIANS. PRIOR TO MOST RECENT MIDDLE EAST TRIP, NEA HAD PROVIDED TALKING POINTS WITH RECOMMENDATION THAT SECRETARY RAISE THE MATTER WITH BOTH EGYPTIANS AND SAUDIS. WE EARLIER HAD REPORT TO EFFECT THAT FAHMY PERSONALLY HAD BEEN EXPRESSING STRONG SUPPORT FOR SOME ECONOMIC ACTION AGAINST PORTUGAL.

3. IF THE SECRETARY OR YOU DID NOT RAISE SUBJECT WITH EGYPTIANS, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR EILTS TO DO SO. IF YOU AGREE, WE WILL ASK HIM TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- THE PORTUGUESE HAVE PICKED UP REPORTS TO EFFECT THAT ARAB STATES ARE PLANNING TO IMPOSE ECONOMIC BOYCOTT ON THEM AS A RESULT OF THEIR DECISION TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. WE DO NOT KNOW IF THIS REPORT IS TRUE BUT WANT TO EXPRESS OUR SERIOUS CONCERN SHOULD IT IN FACT BE TRUE.

-- IT WOULD BE TRAGIC TO PULL THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER A STATE THAT HAS BEEN A BULWARK AGAINST COMMUNIST INROADS.

-- AN ARAB ECONOMIC BOYCOTT ON PORTUGAL WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE CLIMATE FOR OUR CONTINUING PEACE-MAKING EFFORT. IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO SQUARE SUCH AN ACTION WITH PROFESSIONS BY THE ARAB STATES THAT THEY ARE READY TO ACCEPT THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AND ITS PLACE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS PART OF AN OVERALL PEACE SETTLEMENT.

-- WE HOPE THE REPORTS WE HAVE HAD OF PROPOSED ACTION AGAINST PORTUGAL ARE UNTRUE.

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4. WE WOULD ALSO PROPOSE TO TELL HERMANN, FOR HIS INFORMATION BUT NOT TO PASS ON TO THE EGYPTIANS, ABOUT THE SAUDI RESPONSE.

5. ROY CONCURS IN ABOVE. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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